

[1st September 1959]

*Village Officers*

\* 60-B Q.—SRI K. SATTANATHA KARAYALAR (on behalf of SRI M. KALYANASUNDARAM): Will the Hon. the Minister for Revenue be pleased to state with reference to question No. 702 answered on 10th April 1958—

(a) whether the Government have reached any decision regarding the village establishments and officers; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU: (a) The matter is still under the consideration of the Government.

(b) Does not arise.

MR. SPEAKER: Questions are over.

[Note.—An asterisk (\*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.]

## II.—STATEMENT BY THE HON. SPEAKER *RE* QUESTIONS.

MR. SPEAKER: May I crave the indulgence of the House for a few minutes? I want to read to you a note on a matter of very vital importance which affects the relationship of the hon. Members and the Speaker. There has been a lot of misunderstanding and I should like to clear the same. That is with regard to questions.

Generally speaking, Members of all Legislative bodies evince great interest in putting questions; as, asking questions on matters of public importance, is the free and unfettered right of Members of every Legislative body. It is vital in public interest to utilize the question hour to the best advantage and as far as practicable it should be confined to questions which refer to matters of public importance. If greater discrimination is exercised by hon. Members in the selection of subjects on which they table questions, the value of the question hour can be greatly enhanced. The idea of putting a question should be to bring home to the Government important matters of administration. It is also imperative that the time of the House should not be wasted on ordinary and unimportant matters.

Normally a question should not give rise to a debate as the usual time for answering a question is about two minutes and secondly a question must be worth asking, from the point of view of the House. Rules 22 to 39 of the Madras Assembly Rules deal with questions and are fairly exhaustive. There are however certain fundamental principles involved which I would like to clarify.

1. A question should relate to a matter of public importance. This has to be decided by the Hon. Speaker. For example, if a Member asks as to how many high schools are in the State of Madras, he is asking for information, but there is no public importance involved in it.